

Message Text

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EXDIS

PASS WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XF, IS, US, PINT, PGOV
SUBJECT: ISRAEL TEN YEARS AFTER THE SIX-DAY WAR

1. SUMMARY: ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1967 WAR, THE BASIC FACTORS WHICH HAVE BLOCKED A RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE REMAIN UNCHANGED. BEYOND SHARPLY DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT WOULD CONSTITUTE AN ACCEPTABLE AND JUST SETTLEMENT IS A PROFOUND RECIPROCAL BARRIER OF DIS-TRUST. ISRAELIS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE ARABS ARE INTRINSICALLY HOSTILE TO ISRAEL AND UNWILLING TO ENTER INTO A PEACE SETTLEMENT WHILE THE ARABS BELIEVE ISRAEL IS DETERMINED TO HOLD ONTO THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES IN-
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DEFINITELY, PERPETUATE THE STATUS QUO AND THWART PALESTINIAN ASPIRATIONS. TWO WARS AND INTENSIVE US-MEDIATED NEGOTIATIONS CULMINATING IN SINAI II HAVE NOT AFFECTED THE ISRAELI CONVICTION THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE ARAB ATTITUDE TOWARDS ISRAEL. AT THE SAME TIME, THE EXTERNAL OCTOBER 1973 EARTHQUAKE (THE UNEXPECTED WAR) AND THE INTERNAL MAY

1977 EARTHQUAKE (THE UNEXPECTED LIKUD VICTORY) HAVE DESTROYED MANY MYTHS AND MUCH OF THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM OF ISRAELIS AND OUTSIDERS ALIKE. PROGNOSIS IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN EVER.

2. THE PERIOD OF RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS AFTER 1973 HAS COINCIDED WITH A PROFOUND ISRAELI INTERNAL CRISIS. THE MODERATE LABOR ALIGNMENT LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN RESOUNDINGLY DEFEATED IN THE WAKE OF A SERIES OF SCANDALS AND REVELATIONS OF CORRUPTION. THE ALIGNMENT'S LEADERSHIP CRISIS IRONICALLY HAS BROUGHT TO POWER BEGIN AND (MOST LIKELY) DAYAN, THE FORMER REGARDED HERETOFORE AS AT THE END OF HIS CAREER AND THE LATTER THE LONER OF ISRAELI POLITICS SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR. FOR SEVERAL YEARS, ISRAELIS HAVE BEEN EXPECTING A US/ISRAELI CONFRONTATION OVER DIFFERING VIEWS ON HOW TO RESOLVE THE ARAB/ISRAELI DISPUTE AND WHAT CONSTITUTES ISRAEL'S SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. KISSINGER'S STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH, THE ALIGNMENT'S COLLABORATION WITH IT AND THE PARTIAL AGREEMENTS WHICH RESULTED FROM IT WERE ALL OPPOSED BY THE LIKUD. MANY ISRAELIS BELIEVE THAT THE MOMENT OF TRUTH IN US/ISRAELI RELATIONS IS COMING SOON, AND THAT THE CONFRONTATION WILL BE SHARPER NOW THAT THE LIKUD IS IN POWER. THE LIKUD FOR ITS PART IS PROJECTING AN IMAGE OF CONFIDENCE THAT THIS CONFRONTATION WILL NOT TAKE PLACE, BUT THAT IF IT DOES, ISRAEL'S NEW LEADERS CAN WITHSTAND THE WHIRLWIND.

3. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT EVOLUTION OVER THE CONFIDENTIAL

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DECADE IN THE ISRAELI APPROACH TO THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, THERE REMAINS A PROFOUND GAP BETWEEN ARAB AND ISRAELI APPROACHES. ISRAEL HAS OPPOSED AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO OPPOSE DEALING WITH THE PLO OR COUNTENANCING THE CREATION OF A THIRD STATE BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL. MOREOVER, ISRAELIS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE STATUS QUO ON THE WEST BANK REMAINS PREFERABLE TO ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION THUS FAR PROPOSED BY OTHERS. IN SUM, AS WE ENTER THE ELEVENTH YEAR SINCE THE 1967 WAR, THE UNITED STATES FACES ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX PERIODS EVER IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL AND THE ARAB WORLD. END SUMMARY

4. THE ISRAELI VIEW OF THE ARABS. A DECADE AFTER THE 1967 WAR AND ALMOST FOUR YEARS SINCE THE 1973 WAR, ISRAELIS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE ENGAGED IN A LONG-TERM CONFLICT WITH THE ARABS IN WHICH THEIR EXISTENCE AND SURVIVAL ARE AT STAKE. MOST ISRAELIS REMAIN DEEPLY CONVINCED THAT THE ARABS ARE NOT INTERESTED

IN NEGOTIATING A GENUINE PEACE SETTLEMENT BUT RATHER
IN OBTAINING ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE HIGHLY VULNERABLE
1967 BORDERS AND THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE
FOR THE MINIMUM POSSIBLE POLITICAL PRICE. WITH THE
EXCEPTION OF A SMALL AND VIRTUALLY INCONSEQUENTIAL
MINORITY ON THE LEFT, MOST ISRAELIS BELIEVE THAT THE
ARABS REMAIN FUNDAMENTALLY UNRECONCILED TO THE PERMANENT
EXISTENCE OF A JEWISH STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THAT
ANOTHER WAR IS INEVITABLE, SOONER OR LATER. THERE IS
ALSO A STRONGLY HELD CONVICTION THAT ARAB OBJECTIVES
TRANSCEND THEIR STATED GOALS WHICH ARE SEEN AS ONLY
A FIRST STAGE PRECEDING FURTHER EFFORTS TO PUSH ISRAEL
BACK TO THE 1947 PARTITION LINES AND ULTIMATELY TO
RENDER IT POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND MILITARILY
IMPOTENT.

5. THE ARAB VIEW OF THE ISRAELIS. AS WE SEE IT FROM
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HERE, THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1967 WAR UNDERLINES
TO THE ARABS A STARKLY DIFFERENT REALITY, THAT OF
CONTUNUED ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF THEIR TERRITORIES AND
PEOPLE. DESPITE TWO WARS AND AN INTENSIVE US-MEDIATED
NEGOTIATING EFFORT, THE ARABS HAVE REGAINED ONLY LIMITED
GROUND IN THE SINAI AND THE GOLAN HEIGHTS WHILE NO

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PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON THE KEY ISSUES OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, THE PALESTINIANS AND JERUSALEM. ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS HAVE CONTINUED TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, STRENGTHENING THE ARAB CONVICTION THAT THE ISRAELIS DO NOT INTEND TO WITHDRAW TO THE 1967 BORDERS, PARTICULARLY ON THE WEST BANK, BUT RATHER TO CREATE NEW FACTS TO FURTHER SOLIDIFY THE PERMANENCY OF THEIR PRESENCE. THE LIKUD VICTORY, FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY BEGIN'S KADOUM VISIT AND HIS COMMENTS ON LIBERATED TERRITORIES, CAN ONLY REINFORCE THEIR VIEW THAT ISRAEL IS DETERMINED TO STAY WHERE IT IS FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE.

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6. THE BARRIER OF DISTRUST. A PERMANENT FEATURE OF THE DECADE (AS OF VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE CONTEMPORARY PERIOD OF ARAB/ISRAELI RELATIONS) IS THE PROFOUND DISTRUST WHICH EACH SIDE CONTINUES TO HARBOR OF THE OTHER'S INTENTIONS. ON THE ISRAELI SIDE THIS DISTRUST OF ARAB INTENTIONS IS AT THE HEART OF THE NEAR-CONSENSUS THAT ISRAEL CANNOT WITHDRAW TO THE 1967 BORDERS OR AGREE TO THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN. IT UNDERLIES THE PREFERENCE OF THE OUTGOING RABIN GOVERNMENT FOR THE SLOW STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS AND WILL BE A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE LIKUD'S APPROACH. IN ITS BLUNTEST FORM MANY ISRAELIS BELIEVE THE ULTIMATE ARAB OBJECTIVE IS THEIR DESTRUCTION. WHAT THE ARABS REGARD AS MODERATION, NAMELY THEIR READINESS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS, IS PERCEIVED HERE AS ANOTHER TACTICAL STAGE IN A LONG-TERM STRUGGLE IN WHICH ISRAEL MUST VIGOROUSLY DEFEND ITS SECURITY INTERESTS. ISRAELIS GENERALLY DISCOUNT WESTERN STATEMENTS REGARDING NEW ARAB MODERATION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 1973 WAR, ARGUING THAT WESTERNERS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE ARAB MIND AND ARE BEING DECEIVED. THE ARAB REFUSAL TO ENTER INTO DIRECT FACE-TO-FACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL IS REPEATEDLY CITED AS PROOF POSITIVE THAT--WHATEVER MAY BE HAPPENING TACTICALLY--

THE ARAB ATTITUDE TO ISRAEL HAS NOT FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED.
WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE BARRIER OF DISTRUST CUTS TWO WAYS.
THE CONTINUED ISRAELI HOLD ON THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
FOR TEN YEARS INEVITABLY REINFORCES THE ARAB VIEW THAT
ISRAELIS HAVE BEEN AND ARE PURSUING AN EXPANSIONIST
POLICY AND ARE UNPREPARED TO ACCEDE TO THEIR JUST DEMAND
FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE. IT IS THIS PROFOUND AND
RECIPROCAL DISTRUST WHICH CONTINUES TO MAKE THE ARAB-
ISRAELI DISPUTE SO INTRACTABLE.

7. WARS AND NEGOTIATIONS. THE DECADE DIVIDES INTO TWO
DISTINCT PERIODS 1967-1973: ISRAEL EMERGED VICTORIOUS
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FROM THE SIX-DAY WAR AND THE NATIONAL MOOD IN THE NEXT
YEARS WAS EBULLIENT, CONFIDENT AND ARROGANT. ISRAELIS
FELT THEY HAD A STRONG GOVERNMENT AND THEY ENJOYED
UNPRECEDENTED ECONOMIC GROWTH. ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY,
ISRAEL CAME TO ACCEPT ITS HOLD OVER THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES AS A NEW STATUS QUO. DAYAN ARGUED AND
CONVINCED MANY THAT IT COULD LAST ALMOST INDEFINITELY.
WHILE WE WERE ABLE TO BRING ABOUT THE 1970 EGYPTIAN-
ISRAELI CEASE-FIRE IN THE WAR OF ATTRITION, OUR LONGER
TERM NEGOTIATING EFFORTS FAILED. THE ROGERS PLAN
COLLAPSED UNDER MRS. MEIR'S SCORN; THE JARRING MISSION
WAS STILLBORN. THE 1973 WAR, PRECIPITATED BY EGYPT
AND SYRIA, CAUGHT ISRAEL UNPREPARED AND OFF-GUARD. IT
BROKE THE STALEMATE AND USHERED IN THE SECOND PERIOD.
1973-1977: WHILE ISRAEL AGAIN WON THE WAR, THE MOOD
WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT. THE MYTHS OF ISRAELI INVINCIBILITY
AND ARAB INCOMPETENCE HAD BEEN SHATTERED. THE OLD HEROES
AND LEADERS HAD FAILED. THE ECONOMIC BOOM COLLAPSED,
IMMIGRATION DECLINED SHARPLY, AND EMIGRATION INCREASED.
UNCERTAINTY, ANXIETY AND SELF-DOUBT REPLACED THE EARLIER
OPTIMISM. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE, THE MEIR AND RABIN GOVERN-
MENTS ENTERED INTO TWO DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS, AND
AFTER THE CRISIS OF THE 1975 REASSESSMENT, INTO SINAI II.
FACED WITH A GROWING INTERNAL CRISIS (SEE BELOW) AND
UNCERTAIN HOW TO PROCEED, THERE WAS LITTLE IF ANY THRUST
FROM THE ISRAELI SIDE AFTER SINAI II FOR REVIVING THE
MOMENTUM OF NEGOTIATIONS.

8. THE 1977 ELECTION. IF THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR WAS AN
EXTERNAL EARTHQUAKE WHICH CAUGHT ISRAELIS AND OUTSIDERS
BY SURPRISE, THE 1977 ELECTION CAN BE SEEN AS AN INTERNAL
EARTHQUAKE WHICH HAS SIMILARLY CAUGHT THEM AND US BY
SURPRISE. THE LIKUD ARGUES THAT THERE IS A DIRECT
CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TWO EVENS, THAT THEIR VICTORY
NOW IS THE DELAYED REACTION OF THE ISRAELI PUBLIC TO
THE FAILURE OF THE LABOR LEADERSHIP IN THE WAR AND

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THEREAFTER, AND SOME LABOR LEADERS RELUCTANTLY AGREE. THE REALITY IS MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT AND, AS MANY ISRAELI COMMENTATORS HAVE NOTED, THE PUBLIC'S DESIRE TO PUNISH THE ALIGNMENT DOES NOT TRANSLATE AUTOMATICALLY INTO A DESIRE TO BRING THE LIKUD TO POWER. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE FOR THE MANY ALIGNMENT SUPPORTERS WHO VOTED FOR THE DMC.

9. WE MUST RECOGNIZE, NONETHELESS, THAT THE 1977 ELECTION CONSTITUTES A WATERSHED IN ISRAELI POLITICS. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 60 YEARS, GONG BACK TO THE PRE-STATE PERIOD, THR RIGHT HAS COME TO POWER. THERE INDEED HAS BEEN A GENUINE SHIFT TO THE RIGHT IN THE ISRAELI PUBLIC. THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM THAT THE ISRAELI VOTER AT THE MOMENT OF TRUTH WOULD STICK WITH THE ALIGNMENT AND THAT HE COULD NOT CONCEIVE OF THE LIKUD AS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE HAS BEEN SHATTERED. OVER FOUR ELECTIONS, THE PARTIES MAKING UP THE LABOR ALIGNMENT HAVE LOST GROUND STEADILY

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WHILE THE PARTIES MAKING UP THE LIKUD HAVE GAINED AND FINALLY OVERTAKEN IT. IT IS TOO SOON TO SAY WHETHER THIS IS A LONG-TERM TREND OR NOT, AND MUCH WILL DEPEND ON THE LIKUD PERFORMANCE IN THE PERIOD AHEAD. BUT, COMING IN THE TENTH YEAR OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION, IT IS A DEVELOPMENT OF PROFOUND IMPORT WHICH WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE THE ALREADY DIFFICULT SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE.

10. THE LEADERSHIP CRISIS AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE LABOR PARTY. FOR THE US VIEWPOINT IT IS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE THAT THE PERIOD OF REVIVED ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS AFTER THE 1973 WAR COINCIDED WITH
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A DEEP INTERNAL CRISIS IN ISRAEL. MANY ISRAELIS NOTED YEARS AGO THAT ISRAEL'S FOUNDING GENERATION WAS NOT PREPARING A SUCCESSOR GENERATION TO TAKE OVER. THE AFTERMATH OF THE 1973 WAR BROUGHT THIS REALITY HOME DRAMATICALLY. WITH THE DEATH OF BEN-GURION AND THE POLITICAL COLLAPSE OF MRS. MEIR, DAYAN AND EBAN, THE LEADERSHIP PASSED TO RABIN, ALLON AND PERES. IT HAS BEEN THEIR UNHAPPY FATE TO PRESIDE OVER THE LABOR PARTY AT ITS LOWEST POINT, SCARRED BY CORRUPTION AND SCANDAL AND DISCREDITED IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC. THE IRONY OF ISRAEL'S LEADERSHIP CRISIS, AND THE ABSENCE OF FRESH NEW FACES, IS UNDERLINED BY THE FACT THAT THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP WILL NOW PASS TO BEGIN, PREVIOUSLY REGARDED BY MANY ISRAELIS AS AT THE END OF HIS CAREER, AN EIGHT-TIME LOSER AND LABOR'S (SIC) GREATEST ELECTORAL ASSET. THE IRONY IS DOUBLED BY HIS SELECTION OF MOSHE DAYAN TO BE HIS FOREIGN MINISTER. SINCE THE 1973 WAR DAYAN HAS BEEN THE LONER OF ISRAELI POLITICS, HELD RESPONSIBLE BY MANY ISRAELIS FOR THE INTELLIGENCE FAILURE PRECEDING THAT WAR AND THE CONSEQUENT INITIAL SETBACKS AND HIGH CASUALTIES. THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM AS RECENTLY AS LAST MONTH WAS THAT DAYAN WAS FINISHED IN ISRAELI POLITICS. THE EMERGENCE OF BEGIN AND DAYAN SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT LIKUD ITSELF HAS FEW NEW FACES TO OFFER, AND THE SITUATION IS MUCH THE SAME ON THE ALIGNMENT SIDE AS WE LOOK FOR MAJOR PERSONALITIES OTHER THAN PERES, RABIN AND ALLON.

11. THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. A MAJOR FEATURE OF THE DECADE HAS BEEN THE EMERGENCE OF THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE TO THE CENTER STAGE OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. IN 1967, THE PLO WAS IN ITS INFANCY AND THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE WAS DEFINED IN UNSC 242 AS A REFUGEE PROBLEM. TODAY, THE PLO IS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN INTER-ARAB POLITICS (ALBEIT WEAKENED BY THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR), THE ARABS HAVE MADE THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE
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ONE OF THEIR CENTRAL DEMANDS FOR RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, AND THEY REJECT EFFORTS TO TREAT THE MATTER IN THE NARROW CONTEXT OF A REFUGEE PROBLEM (WHICH IS HOW THE LIKUD SEES IT). WE OURSELVES HAVE SPOKEN OF A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND, A VERBAL SYMBOL WHICH ISRAELIS INTERPRET AS A SIGN OF DEEP EROSION IN US/ ISRAELI RELATIONS.

12. ISRAEL HAS GONE THROUGH A SIGNIFICANT EVOLUTION ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, BUT ONE WHICH STILL LEAVES A DEEP GAP BETWEEN IT AND THE ARABS. IN THE LATE SIXTIES, ISRAEL INSISTED THAT THERE WAS NO PALESTINIAN PROBLEM (OTHER THAN A REFUGEE ONE FOR WHICH THE ARABS BORE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY). AS MRS. MEIR SAID DEFIANTLY, "WE ARE ALL PALESTINIANS." SHE EFFECTIVELY PREVENTED ANY MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER IN THE CABINET, AND BLOCKED WEST BANK ARABS FROM ATTENDING PALESTINIAN CONCLAVES IN THE ARAB WORLD. AFTER THE 1973 WAR AND MRS. MEIR'S DEPARTURE, ISRAELI MODERATES LAMENTED THE LOST OPPORTUNITY IN THE 1967-1973 PERIOD DURING WHICH-- THEY SUBSEQUENTLY BELIEVED-- IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP AN AUTONOMOUS WEST BANK LEADERSHIP AND BLOCK THE EMERGENCE OF THE PLO.

13. IN 1974, THE ISRAELI CABINET OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WAS A PALESTINIAN PROBLEM AND FORMULATED ITS WELL-KNOWN PROPOSAL THAT ITS SOLUTION OUGHT TO BE FOUND IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN. THIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY MODIFIED TO INCLUDE THE POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION OF PROMINENT WEST BANKERS. THERE HAVE BEEN A VARIETY OF PLANS, OUTLINED BY ALLON, PERES AND DAYAN, FOR SOLVING THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. THEIR COMMON CHARACTERISTIC IS THAT ALL OF THEM ENVISAGE RETENTION OF PART OR ALL OF THE WEST BANK AND HENCE ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS. THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE ITS OWN PLANS, THE OUTLINE OF WHICH WE CAN GLEAN FROM BEGIN'S AND
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DAYAN'S STATEMENTS. WHILE DAYAN HAS OBTAINED A COMMITMENT FROM BEGIN NEITHER TO ANNEX THE WEST BANK OR APPLY ISRAELI LAW TO IT AS LONG AS THERE ARE NEGOTIATIONS AND WITHOUT KNESSET LEGISLATION, THE BEST THAT CAN BE SAID IS THAT THIS WILL MEAN THE CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO. FOR MOST ISRAELIS, THAT STATUS QUO HAS BEEN PREFERABLE TO ANY ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTED BY THE ARABS OR OUTSIDERS AND, AS FAR AS WE CAN JUDGE, THE REMAINS THE CASE TODAY. THE LIKUD GOVERNMENT, LIKE ITS PREDECESSOR, WILL REFUSE TO DEAL WITH THE PLO OR COUNTENANCE ANY POSSIBILITY OF A THIRD STATE BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL.

14. US/ISRAELI RELATIONS. OUR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL OVER TEN YEARS HAVE PASSED THROUGH SEVERAL STAGES. WHILE ALL PRESIDENTS HAVE RESTATED STRONGLY OUR BASIC COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL, ISRAELIS DISTINGUISH SHARPLY BETWEEN OUR POSTURE BEFORE AND AFTER THE 1973 WAR. WHILE WE DISAGREED OVER THE ROGERS PLAN, THE HIGHPOINT

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OF US/ISRAELI RELATIONS FROM THE ISRAELI VIEWPOINT
CAME BETWEEN 1970 AND 1973 SINCE IT WAS IN THIS
PERIOD THAT OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE INCREASED DRAMATICALLY
(THE SYMBOL OF THIS PERIOD IS THE PHANTOM JET). ISRAELIS
WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE FURTHER MASSIVE INCREASE IN US
ASSISTANCE (ECONOMIC AS WELL AS MILITARY) DURING AND
SINCE THE 1973 WAR, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE POSTWAR
NEGOTIATING PROCESS USHERED IN A PERIOD OF DEEP UNCERTAINTY
AND DISTRUST OF LONG-TERM US MIDDLE EAST OBJECTIVES AND
THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR ISRAEL. KISSINGER'S STEP-BY-STEP
APPROACH, ITS ACCEPTANCE BY MEIR AND RABIN AND THE
INTERIM AGREEMENTS RESULTING THEREFROM, WERE BEHEMENTLY
AND CONSISTENTLY CRITICIZED BY THE LIKUD AND THE RIGHT-
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WING PRESS AS DETRIMENTAL TO ISRAEL'S VITAL INTERESTS.
THE LIKUD VOTED AGAINST ALL THE POSTWAR AGREEMENTS.

15. THE ISRAELI REACTION TO THE FIRST MONTHS OF THE
CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN ONE INITIALLY OF UNCERTAINTY
AND NOW SHOCK AND DISMAY. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE
INCONSEQUENTIAL FAR LEFT, MOST ISRAELIS DISAGREE DEEPLY
WITH THE PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON TERRITORIAL ISSUES
AND THE PALESTINIANS, AND IN THEIR NEGATIVE RESPONSE
TO THESE HAVE TENDED TO DOWNPLAY THE IMPORT OF HIS VIEWS
ON THE NATURE OF PEACE. MANY ISRAELIS SEE THESE STATE-
MENTS AS PRESAGING A SHARP CONFRONTATION AND BELIEVE
THAT THE MOMENT OF TRUTH IN US/ISRAELI RELATIONS MAY
NOT BE FAR AWAY. THE EXPECTATION OF AN IMMINENT CON-
FRONTATION IS NOT NEW (IT EXISTED BEFORE BOTH THE US
AND THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS) NOR IS EXCLUSIVELY LINKED
TO THE LIKUD VICTORY. DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF THE
PRESIDENT'S THOUGH PRESENTATION TO RABIN HAVE NOW
SURFACED IN THE ISRAELI PRESS. BUT ISRAELIS RECOGNIZE
TO VARYING DEGREES THAT THE CONTRAST BETWEEN US AND
ISRAELI VIEWS IS EVEN SHARPER UNDER THE NEW CIRCUMSTANCES.

16. THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE. SINCE THE 1973 WAR, THIS
EMBASSY IN ITS PERIODIC SURVEYS HAS SAID THAT ISRAELIS
LOOK TO AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE WITH DOUBT AND ANXIETY
ABOUT WHAT LIES AHEAD. THERE IS A PERCEPTIBLE STREAK
OF FATALISM IN MANY ISRAELIS THAT THE CYCLE OF WAR AND
RESPITES FROM WAR WILL GO ON INDEFINITELY. THESE OB-
SERVATIONS REMAIN VALID TODAY, BUT THE LIKUD VICTORY
HAS AFFECTED THE OUTLOOK TO THE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH IN
WAYS THAT ARE NOT YET FULLY CLEAR. MANY ISRAELIS

PROBABLY HAVE NOT YET FULLY GRASPED THE IMPORT OF WHAT
HAS HAPPENED, AND THEY ARE WAITING TO SEE WHAT THEIR
NEW GOVERNMENT WILL LOOK LIKE. AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT,
THE LIKUD IS PROJECTING AN IMAGE OF CONFIDENCE--THAT
ISRAEL CAN HANDLE THE SITUATION AHEAD, THAT THERE NEED
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NOT BE A CRISIS IN US/ISRAELI RELATIONS BUT IT CAN BE
FACED SUCCESSFULLY IF IT COMES, AND THAT ITS NEGOTIATING
POLITION HAS IMPROVED WITH THE EMERGENCE OF A STRONG
TEAM WHICH KNEWS BETTER THAN THE ALIGNMENT WHAT
ISRAEL'S INTERESTS ARE AND HOW TO PROTECT THEM. THE
ALIGNMENT IN CONTRAST IS ABSORBING ITS DEFEAT,ITS
LEADERSHIP PHYSICALLY EXHAUSTED AND ITS SELF-CONFIDENCE
LARGELY ERODED. ITS REVIVAL, EVEN ITS CONTINUATION IN
ITS PRESENT FORM, WILL BE NO EASY MATTER AND MAY TAKE
CONSIDERABLE TIME. IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE WHETHER
IT WILL BE AN EFFECTIVE "FIGHTING OPPOSITION." AGAINST
THIS BACKGROUND, THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE GOES ON,
ISRAELI OCCUPATION ENTERS ITS ELEVENTH YEAR, AND THE
UNITED STATES FACES ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX PERIODS
EVER IN ITS RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND THE ARAB WORLD.
IT IS A SOBERING MOMENT.
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770202-1057
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770681/aaaactbt.tel
Line Count: 576
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 901b3a83-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 11
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
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Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2241718
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAEL TEN YEARS AFTER THE SIX-DAY WAR
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, XF, IS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/901b3a83-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
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